

HOMILY – WHAT DO WE KNOW? – 3 APRIL 2016

WHAT DO WE KNOW?

Early on the 1st day of the week Mary Magdalene comes to the tomb and see the stone removed.

What does she do?

She runs and reports it to Peter and the Johannine disciple.

(We humbly take whatever we know to God in prayer, we know only a part of the puzzle of life).

They go to check out what Mary said.

Peter and the other disciple go in, see, believe but don't understand.

They go back home.

No, that's not the end of the story.

Why?

Mary doesn't go home.

She remains at the entrance to the tomb, weeping, looking into the tomb.

Two angels enter a conversation with her. She explains her concerns.

She looks around and sees someone who asks her why she is weeping? She responds.

Finally the person says 'Mary' and she RECOGNISES that is he is JESUS risen.

Naturally she wants to touch him, but Jesus says do not hold, Jesus SENDS her to the brothers.

Having been sent by Jesus, she goes and ANNOUNCES to them that she has seen Jesus.

(The Gospel highlights Mary Magdalene's dual role:

WITNESS to the Good News of Jesus risen

PROCLAIMER of the Good News of Jesus risen.)

Mary is sent by Jesus.

(What conditioning within church and society still denies the full role of Mary Magdalene?)

(As a matter of justice, of mercy, of Gospel, who do we still exclude today?)

(We think of those survivors who told of the sexual abuse in the church, and weren't believed).

Yet the disciples are still scared and have the door closed.

They don't want to suffer like Jesus, and die.

We too put up CLOSED DOORS in our lives; when we are scared, when fear rules.

We close the doors to whom?

Yet the closed doors can't keep Jesus out.

(Who do we exclude in our families, neighbourhood, parish, friendships, recreation, politics, world?)

(Who do we exclude even in our prayer?)

That same evening Jesus appears to them.

Not just appears, but stands in their midst.

That's where we find Jesus, in the MIDST of our lives, with all its fears, and doubts, and concerns and challenges, joys and hopes and expressions of love.

(Do we recognise Jesus, in the midst, challenging, comforting, healing).

JOY? Yes, the disciples REJOICE when they recognise JESUS in their midst.

At what point did they REJOICE?

After Jesus offers them 'PEACE' and shows them his hands and side.

They rejoice and then Jesus offers them PEACE again.

JESUS then SENDS them; breathing on them and saying,

"Receive the Holy Spirit. IF you forgive the sins of any, they are forgiven them; if you retain the sins of any, they are retained."

So were the all disciples there?

No. Thomas wasn't there.

Jesus comes back again when Thomas is present with them.

WHY didn't Thomas believe the rest of the disciples the first time?

WHY didn't the disciples believe Mary Magdalene when she announced Jesus as risen?

Jesus came back for the disciples.

Jesus came back for Thomas.

Jesus came back for you and for me.

LET US REJOICE in Jesus Christ risen.

[Fr. Gerry Hefferan – Homily – What Do We Know? – 3 April 2016]

[Readings of the Day: <http://www.usccb.org/bible/readings/032016.cfm>]

[Additional Gospel reading referred to: <http://www.usccb.org/bible/john/20:1>]